Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Previously Presented) A method of establishing a computer-based communication session involving a user of a computer, said method comprising:

> receiving, from the user, notification of a desired participant in the communication session and a desired communications application to be used for the session, wherein the desired communications application is selected from multiple communications applications available for use in the session, and wherein said receiving comprises detecting selection of an icon within a graphical user interface displayed using the computer;

> retrieving a participant identifier effective to identify the desired participant to the desired communications application; and

> providing the retrieved participant identifier to the communications application.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said receiving further comprises detecting selection of a first displayed icon, and movement of the first icon to the position of a second displayed icon.

4. (Original) The method as recited in claim 3, wherein one of the first and second icons represents the desired participant and the other represents the desired communications application.

5. (Original) The method as recited in claim 3, wherein one of the first and second icons represents a previously-established communications session with the desired participant using a different communications application, and the other represents the desired communications application.

6. (Original) The method as recited in claim 3, wherein one of the first and second icons represents a group of desired participants and the other represents the desired communications application.

7. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said retrieving comprises accessing a data structure storing the participant identifier.

8. (Original) The method as recited in claim 7, wherein said receiving comprises receiving required participant permission or role information, and wherein said retrieving further comprises verifying participant or role information stored in the data structure.

9. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising displaying, on a display screen of the computer, a graphical user interface including representations of multiple communications applications accessible with the computer and representations of multiple potential participants in a communications session.

10. (Original) The method as recited in claim 9, wherein said representations of multiple communications applications and said representations of multiple potential participants comprise respective icons.

11. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising retrieving a user identifier appropriate to identify the user to the desired communications application.

12. (Original) The method as recited in claim 11, further comprising retrieving a password effective to allow access of the user to the desired communications application.

13. (Currently Amended) A system for computer-based communications, comprising:

> means for displaying, on a display screen of the computer, a graphical user interface including representations of multiple communications applications accessible using the computer and of multiple potential participants in a communications session, wherein said representations comprise icons, and wherein said means are adapted to detect a combined selection of a first icon representing a desired communications application and a second icon representing a desired participant;

> means for receiving, from a user of a computer, notification of a desired participant in a communications session and a desired communications application for use in the communications session, wherein the desired communications application is selected from the multiple communications applications accessible using the computer;

means for retrieving a participant identifier appropriate to identify the desired participant to the desired communications application; and

means for providing the retrieved participant identifier to the communications application.

14. (Previously Presented) The system as recited in claim 13, wherein said means for displaying, means for receiving, means for retrieving and means for providing comprise a communications aggregation program stored on a storage medium within the system.

15. (Original) The system as recited in claim 14, wherein the storage medium is within or accessible by the computer.

16. (Original) The system as recited in claim 14, wherein the storage medium is within or accessible by an additional computer.

17. (Original) The system as recited in claim 14, wherein the communications aggregation program is adapted to access a data structure including the participant identifier.

18. (Original) The system as recited in claim 17, wherein the data structure is stored on or accessible by an additional computer.

19. - 20. (Canceled)

21. (Original) The system as recited in claim 13, further comprising means for retrieving a user identifier appropriate to identify the user to the desired communications application.

22. (Currently Amended) A computer-usable carrier medium, comprising:

first program instructions executable on a computer for displaying, on a display screen of the computer, a graphical user interface including representations of multiple communications applications accessible with the computer and of multiple potential participants in the communications session, wherein said representations comprise icons;

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second program instructions executable on the computer for receiving, from a first
   participant, notification of a desired additional participant in a communication session
   and a desired communications application for use in the session, wherein the desired
   communications application is currently selected, or has been previously selected,
   from the multiple communications applications;

third program instructions executable on the computer for retrieving a participant identifier
   appropriate to identify the desired additional participant to the desired
   communications application; and

fourth program instructions executable on the computer for providing the retrieved participant
   identifier to the communications application.

23. (Previously Presented) The carrier medium as recited in claim 22, wherein the first, second,
third and fourth program instructions are within a communications aggregation program stored on
the carrier medium.

24. - 25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously Presented) The carrier medium as recited in claim 22, further comprising fifth
program instructions executable on the computer for retrieving a first participant identifier appropriate
to identify the first participant to the desired communications application.

27. (Previously Presented) A computer-usable carrier medium, comprising:

a data structure for storing multiple sets of participant identifiers, wherein each of the multiple
   sets is effective for identifying a potential participant in a computer-based
   communications session to each of multiple communications applications available
   for use in the communications session; and

a set of program instructions executable on a computer for displaying a graphical user
   interface including representations of multiple communications applications
   accessible with the computer and representations of multiple potential participants in
   the communications session, wherein said representations comprise icons.

28. (Original) The carrier medium as recited in claim 27, wherein the data structure further stores role or permission information corresponding to each potential participant.

29. (Original) The carrier medium as recited in claim 27, wherein the data structure comprises an object or class in an object-based programming approach, and each set of participant identifiers is within a respective additional object.

30 - 33. (Canceled)